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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEST MICHIGAN ROLLOVER CRASH SURVIVOR PROMOTES SAFETY BELT USE IN NEW PSA

As Emily Bowness of Holland prepares to celebrate Thanksgiving with her friends and family, she has much to be thankful for this holiday season – not the least of which is a safety belt.

On May 22, the Holland woman was involved in a horrific rollover crash on I-96 in Ingham County, a crash that could have claimed her life if she was not buckled up.

"I remember rolling the first time, and I remember landing," Bowness said. "I knew I was hurt, but I knew I was alive. Wearing my safety belt saved my life."

The crash was the result of a merging vehicle causing another vehicle to veer into Bowness' lane, which then caused her to swerve and rollover. The entire incident was captured on the in-car camera of an Oakland County deputy who happened to be driving behind Bowness on the highway.

The footage made national headlines, and Bowness has been interviewed countless times, appearing on several television talk shows. In an effort to urge more motorists to buckle up, Bowness also agreed to work with the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) on a new public service announcement (PSA) promoting the use of safety belts.

Television stations across the state have been sent the 30-second PSA and asked to play it in an effort to encourage motorists to buckle up every time they get into a vehicle.

"We appreciate her willingness to share her experience and to promote the effectiveness of safety belts," said Michael L. Prince, OHSP division director. "The bottom line is safety belts save lives, and Ms. Bowness is living proof of that fact."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, safety belts are proven to reduce the risk of serious injury or death in a crash by 45 percent in a car. The risk of reduction for pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles is as much as 60 percent.

With the Thanksgiving holiday increasing travel on Michigan roadways, all motorists are urged to buckle up. Michigan law requires all drivers and front seat passengers to be buckled up and children under age 4 to be in an approved child safety seat. It also requires passengers 15 and younger to be buckled up in all seating positions.

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